

Essential Poetry Vocabulary

poetry on the page

epigraph – quote at beginning of poem from another author offering theme or inspiration

stanza – form of paragraphing in poetry to separate sections with blank line

ode – poem in praise or celebration of its subject

couplet – two successive lines, usually in same meter, that rhyme

caesura – pause or break within a line of poetry introduced through punctuation

enjambement – idea of line wraps from one line to next without punctuation

end stop – idea of line reaches completion at the end of line usually with punctuation

words

diction – author's word choice

denotation – basic definition or dictionary meaning of a word

connotation – associations a word suggests beyond its basic definition

tone – writer or speaker's attitude toward subject

sound

meter – regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables

rhyme scheme – pattern in which rhyme sounds occur in a stanza

slant rhyme – approximate rhyme

alliteration – repetition at close intervals of initial consonant sounds in stressed syllables

figurative language

simile – comparison between two unlike objects using 'like' or 'as'

metaphor – direct comparison between two unlike objects

personification – giving animals, ideas, abstractions, and inanimate objects human form or personality

hyperbole – extravagant exaggeration for effect

idiom – a fixed, often colorful, expression whose meaning cannot be understood from the individual words